LONG TERM PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS IN RURAL ETHIOPIA

THREE POLICY PAPERS FOR DFID – KEY MESSAGES

YOUTH ON THE PATH TO ADULTHOOD IN CHANGING RURAL ETHIOPIA

CHANGING INEQUALITIES IN RURAL ETHIOPIA: DIFFERENTIAL IMPACTS OF INTERVENTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

THE ROLE OF THE 'GOVERNMENT GO-BETWEENS' IN CHANGING RURAL ETHIOPIA

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Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Introduction to the WIDE3 research

1.   Over the past seven years significant changes in Ethiopia include high economic growth rates, expansion in services and political and governance reforms, and the country is now embarking on ambitious plans outlined in the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) 2010/11–2014/15. However, the impact of these changes at local rural level is not well known; in particular the extent to which there are variations, by region, geographical area and type of community and by sector or issue, remains unclear. Rural communities are open complex systems whose workings are not well understood. With limited baseline information, there is limited awareness of (i) cumulative community level effects of the range of decentralised donor-supported government programmes instituted in the last seven years; (ii) the differential effects for different people and groups within communities; (iii) how these interact with both local dynamics and broader modernisation processes; (iv) how changes are related to and impact on governance.

2.   The WIDE3 research, of which the three policy papers emanate, addresses this knowledge gap[1]. To this effect the WIDE3 research team have designed a three-stage research programme to explore modernisation processes since 1995 and the implementation of government policies since 2003 in twenty exemplar rural communities. Extensive quantitative and qualitative databases relating to these communities have been produced over the past fifteen years through the Ethiopia Longitudinal Community Study (ELCS), as explained in the WIDE3 documentation.

3.   The WIDE3 research – entitled 'Long Term Perspectives on Development Impacts in Rural Ethiopia' – builds upon and continues the ELCS: in WIDE3 we are using the earlier databases in conjunction with new fieldwork to trace the economic, social, political and cultural trajectories of each of the communities, and investigate the effects of government interventions since 2003.

4.   In a first stage fieldwork was conducted in six of the twenty sites (a combination of three food insecure and three food secure sites). The second stage will pursue the research in eight of the twenty communities, all food-insecure sites. A third stage focusing on the last six surplus and cash producing communities will complete this round of the longitudinal study.

The Policy Papers in relation to WIDE3 Stage 1 main findings and conclusion
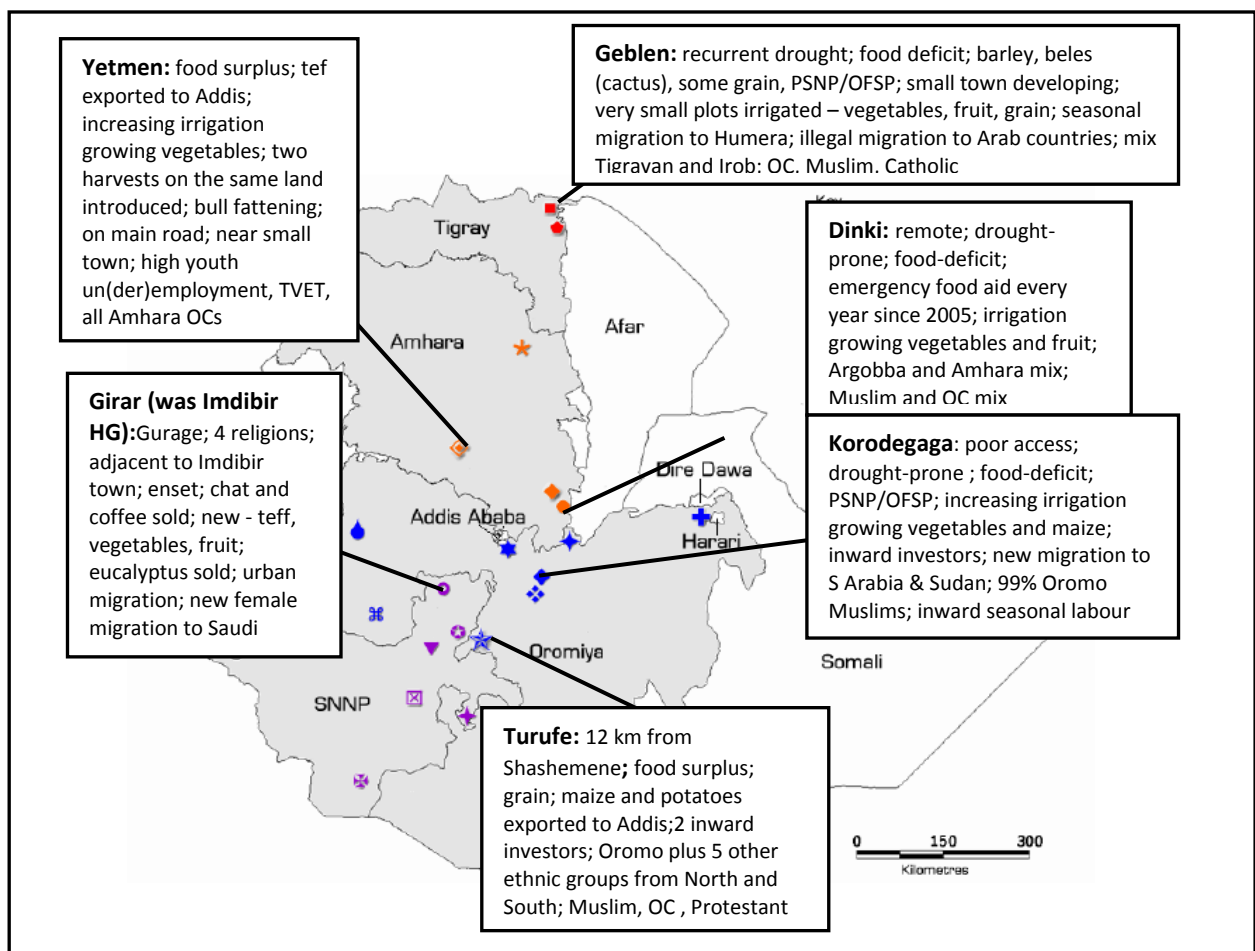
5.   The WIDE3 Stage 1 research showed that accelerating modernisation processes brought significant changes to the six Stage 1 communities between 1995 and 2010. Since 2003 all six sites, in their different ways, have experienced economic improvements, lifestyle changes, improved service provision, increased access to justice, and declining gender inequalities. Government interventions, some aid-supported, were key to progress in education and health service provision and women's rights and opportunities. Infrastructure interventions, including new and improved roads, electricity, and the establishment of small kebele 'town' centres, contributed to lifestyle changes and improved access to schools and health services. These infrastructure changes also contributed positively to local economies in all the sites, although the contribution of direct economic interventions involving extension services, improved seeds and fertiliser, and in some places small scale irrigation, varied significantly among the communities.

6.   Thus as the report shows in more detail, much positive change has been achieved in all the communities since the early 1990s. However, as is to be expected during times of rapid change from a low base, there were some issues of concern including in relation to broader governance dimensions. Three are highlighted here, the first two of which have been picked up to an extent in the Growth and Transformation Plan.

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[1] WIDE stands for Well-being and Ill-being Dynamics in Ethiopia

7.   First, government services and policies were **not reaching everybody**, notably many very poor and destitute people. Second, a notable category with **needs not being met were the youth** who in all sites were at risk of landlessness and un(der)-employment; some of the responses to this state-of-affairs could have adverse consequences for themselves and the community. Third, the main **community level change agents** (the agricultural and health extension workers, teachers and *kebele* managers) were found to often perceive themselves to be 'between two fires' (the wereda plans and targets, and the communities with ideas of their own); this tension and difficult life conditions contributed to episodes of personal stress, inefficiency and inaccurate reporting.

8.   The three policy papers commissioned by DFID picked up these three themes. As such, they are based on the WIDE3 research Stage 1, hence on data related to six of the twenty exemplar communities. These are located in the map below.

Map 1: The Six Stage 1 Sites in 2010

Yetmen: food surplus; tef exported to Addis; increasing irrigation growing vegetables; two harvests on the same land introduced; bull fattening; on main road; near small town; high youth un(der)employment, TVET, all Amhara OCs

Geblen: recurrent drought; food deficit; barley, beles (cactus), some grain, PSNP/OFSP; small town developing; very small plots irrigated – vegetables, fruit, grain; seasonal migration to Humera; illegal migration to Arab countries; mix Tigravan and Irob: OC. Muslim. Catholic

Dinki: remote; drought-prone; food-deficit; emergency food aid every year since 2005; irrigation growing vegetables and fruit; Argobba and Amhara mix; Muslim and OC mix

Girar (was Imdibir HG): Gurage; 4 religions; adjacent to Imdibir town; enset; chat and coffee sold; new - teff, vegetables, fruit; eucalyptus sold; urban migration; new female migration to Saudi

Korodegaga: poor access; drought-prone ; food-deficit; PSNP/OFSP; increasing irrigation growing vegetables and maize; inward investors; new migration to S Arabia & Sudan; 99% Oromo Muslims; inward seasonal labour

Turufe: 12 km from Shashemene**;** food surplus; grain; maize and potatoes exported to Addis;2 inward investors; Oromo plus 5 other ethnic groups from North and South; Muslim, OC , Protestant

3

Youth on the Path to Adulthood in Changing Rural Ethiopia

Philippa Bevan with Rebecca Carter and Agazi Tiumelissan

1.   The paper '**Youth on the Path to Adulthood in Changing Rural Ethiopia'** explores the changing nature of youth passages to adulthood in rural Ethiopia using the complexity social science methodological approach underpinning the Ethiopia Longitudinal Community Study (ELCS). Most of the evidence base comes from survey and protocol data made as part of that study in six rural communities[2] between 2003 and 2010. Where available national survey data are used to contextualise the findings from these six exemplars and suggest which important community types are missing. Quantitative and qualitative data are viewed as traces of the trajectories of the community, household, person and country systems through the period under consideration (mid-2000s – 2010).

2.   The process of producing the paper can be compared with that of making a tapestry; one which started with an initial rough framework but no fixed template. Through a process of weaving different bits of the data in a set of inter-linked theorised niches and 'learning by writing' a picture is emerging. This picture is not an endpoint but opens up new ways of thinking and feeling about youth passages to inform policy and further research. This note presents the **key messages** arising from this tapestry-making process, which is further outlined as well as the analysis of the data in the full paper.

Context: challenges facing young people in rural Ethiopia

3.   In 2007 there were over **25 million young people** aged 10-29 living in rural Ethiopia, amounting to **41% of the rural population.**

4.   As boys and girls set out on their journeys to adulthood in rural Ethiopia they are faced with fifteen transitions or boundary crossings, all or most of which a successful adulthood requires. Six of these are **personal** and embodied although the final two are optional in some contexts. They are *puberty*, *sexual initiation*, *identity-formation*, and the acquiring of relevant *work skills*, and in many contexts *circumcision*, and the *ending of formal education*. There are three **work-related transitions**: the establishment of *income-generating* and *home-related working careers* and *economic independence*. The three **family-related transitions** are *marriage*, *parenthood* and the setting up of an *independent household*. **Community-related transitions** are *accepting responsibilities in adult social networks*, participating in *community-initiated organisations*, and acting as a local *citizen*. For a young man the most important transition in the passage is becoming economically independent and getting a long-term work strategy in place on the basis of which he can get and stay married. For young women it is getting married followed by having a child; this depends on her finding a husband who is economically independent with a long-term work role in place.

5.   All these transitions are surrounded by (contested) local beliefs and norms indicating when and how they ought to take place. Through our long-term research it has been possible to identify two ideal-type cultural repertoires in each community which combine compatible beliefs and norms. **Local customary repertoires** have long roots and change very slowly while **local modern repertoires** can quite rapidly incorporate incoming ideas and rules that are seen to bring advantage to some community members and are not too undermining of customary ideas and norms.

6.   Many of the transitions have become the object of Government concern motivated by an ideology which depends on mental models and proposed rules and norms associated with Revolutionary Democracy/Developmental States. Over the last five years or so rural young people in

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[2] Referred to throughout the paper as the WIDE3Stage1 communities.

their teens and twenties have been growing up in a context of **accelerated government-led community change** which itself is part of larger longer-term modernisation processes. In many respects they have found themselves 'between the devil and the deep blue sea' as government employees and communities led by 'elders' and other elite members have conducted a series of **long-running overt and covert struggles over fundamental issues**, some of which have affected the passages of youth to adulthood which are the topic of this paper. Recent Government-community struggles with consequences for female transitions have concerned **circumcision**, **age of sexual initiation** and **marriage**. The Government has been less pro-active in relation to male passages to adulthood which are being increasingly delayed by lack of access to land or secure employment.

7.   Rural communities in Ethiopia have customarily been organised around **patriarchal and gerontological structures**. While land-owning, and therefore tax-paying, women and young males who head households at least theoretically have the same duties, rights and opportunities as older adult male heads, these constitute a small proportion of male and female youth in communities. The large and growing category of youth dependents who live in households headed and wived by others have always been excluded from meaningful political participation, though the government has hoped to change this through the establishment of Women and Youth Associations as voices and mobilisers of the two status groups.

8.   The programme in support of women has been in place longer and has been much more rigorously planned and implemented than the programme for youth. Since the turn of the millennium a mix of legislation and service provision has brought real changes for women in rural communities, though it has not yet given them a collective voice in local politics. However, there is some ambiguity as to whether female youth are Women or Youth with the consequence that in many places they have turned out to be neither. Rural Youth Associations are dominated by males but they have had little success in mobilising youth due to lack of leadership ability on their part and on the part of 'youth' lack of land, resources, skills, organising capacity and a diversity of interests.

9.   The paper documents considerable changes to the rural contexts and cultural contents of youth transitions since the mid-2000s and predicts even more changes over the next five years. Some features are found commonly across rural communities while others are linked with particular livelihood or cultural contexts.

Youth and development since the mid-2000s

10. In relation to **personal efficacy** for many young people there have been increases in **competence** via health improvements, the reduction of female circumcision, access to education and the chance to pick up new agricultural and domestic work techniques through observation and labour. Younger youth have benefited more. There have also been increases in **autonomy** for young people of both sexes while their ability to **relate** to different kinds of people and experience has also improved as communities have opened up to external influences and urban linkages have thickened. A major concern is the effect that the cultural chaos and government-community struggles over fundamental issues found in many communities is having on the **meaning** young people are making of their lives.

11. **Work-related transitions** have become increasingly problematic for young men as pressure on land has reduced smallholder farming opportunities and many youth have been forced to seek out irregular casual agricultural and non-farm work. A lack of policy interest in the informal sector has meant that there are no personnel (employers, trainers, mentors) to help young people into a non-farming informal sector which is almost non-existent. It is as if they were expected to create it themselves. While in many respects young women are increasingly benefitting from changes affecting **family-related transitions** including the rising age of marriage and access to contraception there is also a downside as these are likely accompanied by rising rates of pre-marital pregnancy and HIV infection. Young men who are not on the smallholder farming route are finding it increasingly difficult

to marry and set up an independent household due to difficulties in accessing work secure enough to support a family and lack of housing. Full **community-related transitions** are only possible for those who are married. The increasing number of 'dependent' young men and unmarried young women have no community voice as patriarchal and gerontological structures in rural communities are still strong and government efforts to provide a collective voice through Youth Associations have not come to fruition.

12.   Young people have **contributed** to **economic development** in recent years through their labour; the evidence suggests that many younger youth have exchanged some leisure for cash-earning work. However, given their lack of resources and opportunities and encouragement to experiment and be creative there is much scope for greater contributions to production and productivity. Most young people living in richer and middle income rural households and some in poorer ones have **benefited** in terms of better living conditions and more access to cash for education, clothes, and urban leisure activities. However there are considerable inequalities in the distribution of benefits. **Investments** in education and health services have increased youth competence although there is a concern about a disconnect between what is taught in schools and the competences needed for the next stage in Ethiopia's development which is bound to involve a big expansion in the informal sector.

13.   **Social cohesion** has five dimensions.

• **Material conditions**: the main concerns here are un(der)employment and lack of housing.
• **Passive social relations**: security in rural communities has increased in recent years; there is concern that fear plays too large a role in the local governance and that the religious tolerance that has marked rural communities for many years may be under threat as a result of religious entrepreneurial activities.
• **Active social relations**: inter-generational relations have generally become more conflictual; communities vary as to the extent of positive interactions and mutual support across different social groups.
• **Social inclusion**: most young people are not well-integrated into local community institutions apart from schools.
• **Social equality**: opportunities for young people are quite restricted and to seize the big ones, such as college education, it is much easier if the family is well-off. Lower-level opportunities often demand a lot of hard work and poor young people can be upwardly mobile as a result.

Community, government and donor models relating to youth transitions

14.   In Government's approach youth figure as policy targets in relation to education, youth circumcision and early marriage, mobilisation for employment and 'democratic participation' through Youth Associations and youth co-operatives, and the provision of Youth sports centres. Some young women's concerns, such as childbirth, are addressed through policies for women. Donors interest in youth has been more restricted and their interests have mostly not been seen as very different from the rest of the population though the model is in accordance with that of the government on education and Harmful Traditional Practices affecting young females.

15.   The main differences between donor and government models come in the employment area with donors emphasising the importance of free markets and the private sector and government focusing on youth co-operatives. Neither acknowledges the informal sector, though it also does not figure in rural community repertoires. The main difference between top-down and community models relates to the roles of girls and women, with the government emphasis being on their contribution to economic development while the donors' language is of gender equality. Local repertoires prioritise marriage, children and home-related work for most women.

16. The main problem with government and donor mental models relating to youth is that they are thin, patchy and disconnected in a number of ways. Section 7.4 of the paper contains some suggestions for joining up the thinking.

Aid strategies for youth in rural Ethiopia

17. In the current policy landscape which includes the Government's Growth and Transformation Plan and various ongoing donor programmes various decisions have already been made and there may not be much space for new initiatives. The first question donors should consider is whether there a need for a more integrated youth focus. One input to this could be a gendered-youth audit of all policies and programmes which traces linkages across programmes and the resultant impacts on young people's lives and choices in relation to personal transitions, and those that are work, family and community related and the likely consequences for their wellbeing, participation in economic development, and community and country social cohesion. Were it to be decided that there is a need for a more integrated youth focus the next step would be to consider which if any of the strategies described below could be inserted in or added to what is already planned.

18. **Dealing with youth issues through existing development interventions**: do what is being done better; focus on laggards; focus on a hard-to-reach problem; identify an area of priority for the government; work with new partners, for example religious leaders.

19. **Make all development interventions more youth-friendly**: youth is a cross-cutter in the same way that gender is; youth audits of all interventions.

20. **Introduce new youth-focused programmes**: e.g. help youth entrepreneurs; finance small exploratory innovative interventions.

21. **Institutionalise successful approaches: deepen, widen, warp**: e.g. trial-and-error pilots to find things that seem to work in particular contexts; trial-and-error pilots to find the best ways to spread things which work; monitor how the multiplying interventions are changing the larger system and identify meso or macro level interventions which would accelerate the change.

22. **Cross-cutting strategy**: regular consultations with young people of different ages and sexes in different rural contexts.

Changing inequalities in rural Ethiopia: differential impacts of interventions and exclusions

Alula Pankhurst with assistance from Rebecca Carter and Agazi Tiumelissan

1.   The paper *'Changing inequalities in rural Ethiopia: differential impacts of interventions and exclusions'* is based on research carried out in six communities in four regions of Ethiopia in 2010. To understand changes it also draws extensively on earlier research mainly in four of these communities from 2003 to 2005 as well as community profiles going back to 1995. This note presents the key messages arising from the full paper. It first presents the improved differentials-exclusions framework which was developed and used for the analysis. It then outlines a number of reflections relevant to policy and practice that arise from the analysis of the data using the framework.

Towards an improved Differentials-Exclusion framework

2.   Much of the lack of awareness about differential impacts of interventions stems from limited appreciation of how differences in types of communities, households and persons affect the ways in which services are accessed and who benefits, and how different forms of exclusion affect various categories of household and persons.

3.   Based on the analysis of the data, in the full paper we develop a framework which addresses this lack of awareness in considering four levels of inequalities, four underlying factors, and four dimensions of exclusions, all of which interact.

- Inequalities in rural Ethiopian may be considered at **four interconnected levels**: 1) inter-community, 2) intra-community, 3) inter-household and 4) intra-household.

- Inequalities can be conceived of as based on **four major interrelated factors**: 1) location, 2) gender-age, 3) wealth and poverty, and 4) other statuses.

- Exclusions are considered in term of **four intertwined dimensions**: 1) economic, 2) social, 3) cultural and 4) political.

4.   We suggest that awareness about differential impacts of interventions requires thinking through the implications of given interventions at these four levels, in relation to these four factors underlying inequalities and these four dimensions of exclusions; and considering how the four levels, the four factors of inequality and the four dimensions of exclusion are interrelated.

5.   In the framework, **inter-community differences** were related to ten parameters.
1)   Regional variations in policies and implementation
2)   Urban linkages of various kinds
3)   Development services
4)   Core livelihood system
5)   Diversification
6)   New agricultural technologies
7)   Cultural differences
8)   Social inequality
9)   Social integration
10)   Government-society relations.

6.   These were regrouped into three broad areas:
1)   Government-community relations
2)   Livelihoods and urban linkages
3)   Socio-cultural context

7. Three key factors differentiate communities in relation to these areas:
   1) Economic and political (in)dependence
   2) Urban proximity and service integration
   3) Internal community composition

8. The emergent typology differentiates into broad categories for each of the three factors
   1) Dependent versus independent economies
   2) Remote versus integrated sites
   3) Homogeneous versus heterogeneous communities

9. **Intra-community differences** were related to the following four factors
   1) Geographical location, settlement and topography
   2) Access to roads and communications
   3) Access to water and irrigation
   4) Access to administration and services

10. **Inter-household differences** were related to the following six factors
    1) Access to resources
    2) Labour composition
    3) Position on the development cycle
    4) Types of household
    5) Shocks faced
    6) Household status

11. **Intra-household** differences between individuals were related to two main factors
    1) Genderage
    2) Dependent status

12. **Exclusions** were seen as having the following four dimensions.
    1) Economic exclusion
    2) Social exclusion
    3) Cultural exclusion
    4) Political exclusion

13. **Households** vulnerable to exclusion include the following eight categories:
    1) The destitute and extremely poor
    2) Very poor female-headed households,
    3) Elderly households without support
    4) Marginalised craftworkers
    5) Marginalised migrants groups
    6) Households in early and late stages of the development cycle
    7) Households that have fallen off the ideal cycle
    8) Households facing shocks, notably health and social shocks

14. **Individuals** vulnerable to exclusion include the following twelve categories:
    1) Children of very poor households or of servants or migrants
    2) Boys not going to school

3) Adolescent boys and young men from poor, migrant or disadvantaged families
4) Adolescent girls and young women from poor and disadvantages categories
5) Very poor and destitute adults,
6) Adult migrants without access to resources
7) Adults facing health shocks, including accidents, chronic illness and disabilities
8) Adult household dependents, servants and labourers
9) Widows and divorcees (and to a lesser extent widowers and divorced men)
10) The elderly who do not have support and lack resources or face disabilities
11) Elderly women living on their own, especially from minorities or low status groups
12) Persons with illnesses associated with social stigma (HIV/AIDS, leprosy, mental illness).

Policy and Practice Implications

15.   A better understanding of the levels of inequalities, the factors underlying them and dimensions of exclusion and the categories of community, household and individuals most at risk can inform improvements to policy and practice. Approaches of government and donors have tended to focus on federal policies and the impact of programmes sectorally at regional and wereda level, or on measures relating to broad categories of person. However, ***the impact of interventions on different types of communities, household and individuals within them deserves more consideration****.*

16.   <u>**Focusing on community differences and types.**</u> Ten parameters explained differences between communities in three broad areas: 1) Government-community relations, Livelihoods and urban linkages, and 3) Socio-cultural context. ***Whereas more attention is given to government-community relations, livelihoods, urban linkages and socio-cultural contexts are very much interrelated with governance.***

17.   In terms of the typology of communities, the independent economies and the integrated peri-urban sites have changed rapidly. Opportunities to control surplus through trade led to the emergence of elites and rising inequalities, although urban linkages are also important for poorer households. However, much of the growth and change has not been directly related to the focus of the agricultural extension services. Social protection support in these communities was more limited and most of the care for vulnerable categories is left to community institutions. ***Drivers of change promoting growth in peri-urban communities and greater linkages between extension services and market potential could be important. Simultaneously enhancing community social protection and mitigating exclusion risks deserves consideration.***

18.   In the dependent economies food for work and safetynet direct support has supported livelihoods notably of the very poor and vulnerable categories. However, some wealthier households were included, due in part to a community ethic of sharing, and some poorer, female-headed and less well connected households were excluded. Provision of food assistance has also resulted in greater control and there was less change related to local initiative and enterprise. In dependent communities with irrigation there has been more potential for cash-crop production and opportunities for those with access to improve livelihoods. However, access to irrigation has been limited and controlled by older generations, local elites and investors. ***Promoting community inclusion of categories currently excluded from assistance, enhancing enterprise beyond food assistance and increasing more inclusive access to irrigation deserve greater attention***.

19.   Not all heterogeneous sites had cultural differences which were related to marked inequalities. However, some correlation between identities, control over resources and local power relations was a feature of all communities and this was more salient in the heterogeneous societies. Migration histories and the politics of resource control are particularly important in multi-cultural settings. In some contexts cultural differences are interrelated with genderage as well as wealth; other

distinctions between sites relate to the existence of other marginalised categories such as craftworkers and migrants and the extent to which these are marginalised and excluded. ***Communities where social inequality is high and social integration is low are potential places where conflict may erupt in conditions of instability; ways of mitigating tensions, promoting integration and addressing the needs of marginalised categories deserve consideration***.

20.   In terms of differences **within communities** proximity to urban areas, to developing *Kebele* centres and villagised areas of sites provides better opportunities to access services and infrastructure. However, poverty and gender may interact with location in excluding categories from access to administration and services. ***An awareness of differences based on location and how access to infrastructure and services is unequally distributed within sites can inform policies and programme to promote greater spread and equity in access and service use. Exclusions relating to location, poverty and gender deserve greater attention.***

21.   **Focusing on household resources, cycles and types**. Inequalities between households were found to depend primarily on the following six factors: 1) access to resources, 2) labour composition 3) position on the development cycles, 4) household types, 5) shocks faced, and 6) the household's status.

22.   Regarding **access to resources** two categories are particularly disadvantaged: **women household heads** who have fallen off the ideal household cycle due to divorce and death of their spouse, and **youth** who have not been able to establish themselves and get onto the ideal cycle due to parental control of limited resources and limited alternatives. Female headed households had less land, livestock and assets. However, among female-headed household divorcees tended to be less well off than widows though cultural differences affect their respective statuses. Promotion of women's land rights has improved the prospects of divorcees, widows, and inherited wives; however, upon divorce women may assert land rights and face constraints of access to male labour. **Though women's land rights have improved largely as a result of interventions, more attention to their access to livestock and income-generating activities could help to improve their status. Not all women heading households are poor or marginalised and culturally mediated distinctions between widows and divorcees are relevant. Access of young men and women to resources and livelihoods is discussed in the companion paper (Bevan 2011).**

23.   **Household labour** composition is related to the development cycles and households in the early and late phases face labour shortage. Though adoption traditions differ richer households facing labour shortages generally bring in children often of poorer relatives, and/or agricultural and domestic labourers. Children from poorer households working in richer households often face hardships, lack of care and education and potential abuse. Agricultural labourers and domestic servants often complain of unfair treatment. They tend to form an invisible underclass of underprivileged and exploited rural workers, not managing to escape this status which may be inherited. Disputes with migrant labourers who were not paid, and more generally between migrants and residents were common. Women working as domestic servants are particularly at risk of exploitation and abuse including rape. In the Gurage site traditions of sending children sent to work as labourers to urban areas were viewed as "trafficking" and interventions to counter this practice were said to have been fairly successful. **Though trafficking of children to urban areas has been the subject of campaigns, abuse of children working as domestic labourers has not been the subject of interventions. Household labourers form an invisible exploited underclass, and female domestic labourers are further at risk of sexual abuse. Migrant domestic workers may not be able to obtain services and lack recourse in conflicts with employers. Advocacy regarding rights of these genderage categories of rural excluded minorities would be important for social change.**

24.   <u>**Household development cycles**</u> are mediated by cultural traditions resulting in two basic household types: those that follow the ideal cycle and those that deviate by not entering the cycle,

falling off it due to death of divorce or abandonment, or are in decline. There is a strong probability of **households that have fallen off cycles** being short of labour and among the poorer or destitute. **Widows and divorcees** face particular problems related to access to male labour, land and in bringing up children. Men are more likely to remarry after becoming widowers or divorcing. *Understanding household cycles and types can lead to a better appreciation of the dynamics of household poverty and how inequalities change over time and generations. The constraints faced by "off-cycle deviator" types, especially widow(er)s, divorcees and elderly households are insights with potentially important policy implications.*

25.   <u>Household shocks</u> were categorised into **four types**: 1) livelihood and reproductive asset shocks, 2) human resources - health shocks, 3) social shocks that are household related, and 4) social shocks that are government related. Often multiple shocks combine leading to downward spirals of impoverishment leading to destitution. **Poorer and destitute** households report a greater proportion of human resource – health shocks. Fire, loss of jobs and debt, divorce and theft and disputes were more commonly reported among the extremely poor. **Wealthier households** are better able to withstand shocks notably drought, whereas poorer and elderly households are more vulnerable and resort to wage labour and seasonal migration to cope. Loss of livestock especially oxen can force households to give land to sharecroppers leading to impoverishment. **Costs of illness** can lead to indebtedness and even to the possibility of exclusion from institutions. **Deaths** often follow high expenses for illness treatment and involve high costs for funerals, borne partly by burial associations explaining willingness of even poor households to invest in regular *iddir* payments. *A better understanding of types of shocks and how they are related to household cycles, poverty and genderage can inform social protection policies and programmes.*

26.   <u>Household status</u> tends to be associated with the household head. The gender and age of the household head are inter-related with wealth, partly mediated by cultural patterns. **Powerful older men** often from dominant status groups have better access to resources and can mobilise support networks; women, younger and poor men have less access to resources and little say in community affairs. **Other statuses** relate to 1) ethnicity and religion, 3) clan identities, 3) residence status, and 4) occupational "caste. **Ethnicity** is important in power relations in two of the three heterogeneous sites and is interrelated with migration histories, wealth and politics. Religious identities were important in relation to education and women's rights. **Clanship** is important among the Arssi Oromo though its significance has declined, apart for in cases of murder and bridewealth payments. **Recent in-migrants** may not have rights of access to resources and services, except where they have been long established, and may face discrimination. **Craftworker minorities** used to be marginalised; despite changes though prejudices remain. *A better understanding of cultural statuses and ways in which minority groups may continue to be marginalised and excluded can inform policy and programmes seeking to promote changes in rural poverty.*

27.   **Focusing on intrahousehold genderage and dependence.** Gender and age are inextricably linked and the fundamental aspects of intra-household power relations and inequalities. Genderage is often interlinked with wealth and other statuses over the individual's life cycle.

28.   Many of the problems facing **infants** relate to the circumstances of their mothers, with poverty, marital status, and occupation of women having a bearing on their childrearing. **Children** particularly in poorer household may have to work from an early age. Though some child work is necessary for household survival and much of it may not be detrimental, excessive work may be harmful particularly for children of poorer and female headed households, sometimes sent to work in richer households. Though most children go to school exceptions, include wealthier households requiring child labour for herding. More boys than girls are attending primary school with the gender balance reversed in secondary school reflecting gender biases and expectations. Attempts to stop the shift school system were successfully resisted in Turufe revealing community that full day education is

unpopular. *A focus on maternal reproductive health can be important for improving conditions for infants. Measures to avoid excessive child labour and discourage employment of child servants may be useful; however banning child labour may not be advisable given rural household labour needs, and shift schooling and flexible calendars may be more effective. Gender disparities with more boys than girls not in school at primarily level and more girls not continuing to secondary and post secondary levels have important policy an d programme implications.*

29.   Condition of the **youth** and the dilemmas, opportunities and constraints they face are the subject of the companion paper (Bevan 2011). Gender differences become accentuated among **adolescents** and with potential sexual activity the differences become most salient with greatly increased risks for girls and young women of abduction, rape, forced marriage, and not finding a husband. **Inequalities between the youth** depend in part on parental ability and willingness to endow children which is also mediated by cultural traditions. *A focus on adolescents and particularly girls can be an important strategy for interventions to affect intergenerational poverty transmission.*

30.   Differences between **adults** depend largely on gender, the status of the household, and whether the adult is a household head, spouse or other dependent. Within household**s dependents** have limited say in decision-making and restricted access to resources and services. The status of dependents is related to genderage, wealth and other household statuses. *A greater awareness of the differential conditions of adult dependents could highlight needs of this neglected category.*

31.   In **old age** the main risk is lack of support and losing control of resources to guarantee that support, once the effects of ageing become felt; wealth and gender differences are crucial in old age, since wealthier elderly households may retain filial allegiance and/or employ household labour, whereas poorer household without support rely on neighbours, community or religious charity. Poorer old women living on their own may be involved in low status activities. Health concerns become more prominent with old age, and improvements in the health extension services and direct support through the productive safety net were welcomed by the elderly, though they may be excluded from certain development initiatives. *More policy and programme emphasis on the needs of the elderly, particularly older women living on their own is desirable; enhancing community social protection and health care for the elderly are potential areas for advocacy and interventions.*

32.   **A focus on exclusions.** Whereas the literature has focused mainly on social the four dimensions of exclusion (economic, social, cultural and political) are interrelated. Exclusions affect categories of person with specific statuses, notably household servants, adult dependents, migrants and craftworkers though statuses are often mediated by genderage and wealth.

33.   <u>Economic exclusion</u> is related to inequalities and tends to be a manifestation of forms of unequal distribution of resources mediated by genderage dimensions. The focus of agricultural and credit extension on richer male households may exclude de facto the poor, women, youth and elderly. Extreme forms of economic exclusion lead to **class-like inequalities.** Two categories often particularly at risk are **household labourers** and **migrants**. *Advocacy to promote more focus of extension services on appropriate measures for non-agricultural extension and addressing the needs and capabilities of specific vulnerable categories could be useful; exclusion of marginalised categories notably labourers and migrants deserves attention.*

34.   <u>Social exclusion</u> relates to the social status of categories of person and is often linked to the economic inequalities. Genderage often channels and restricts access to resources. Youth, women heading households, the elderly and dependents tend to have less access to land and other resources. Exclusion from forms of social organisation, networks and associations is partly related economic exclusion, due to inability of the poor to afford membership fees, or the cost of sponsoring work parties. Despite some social inclusion and protection of the destitute and people with illnesses and disabilities, people with illnesses linked to social stigma, such as HIV/AIDS, leprosy and mental illness,

may be ostracised. Affirmative action to counter social exclusion may face resistance or heighten tensions as with the case of women's land rights*. **Interventions focusing on social categories at risk of exclusion including the poor, female headed, elderly and dependents, and people with stigmatised illnesses deserve support.**

35.   <u>Cultural exclusion</u> is linked to identity markers and norms related to ethnicity and/or religion and cultural traditions, sometimes linked to gender and local politics. Affirmative action to counter cultural exclusion may face resistance or heighten tensions as noted in relations to customs defined as harmful such as female genital cutting, early marriage, polygyny and widow inheritance. ***Attempts to change customary practices may be more effective through mediation and negotiating with cultural brokers rather than simply through imposed legislation and penalties.***

36.   <u>Political exclusion</u> involved categories who were seen to have been over-privileged in previous regimes, and cases of persons seen as linked to opposition. Indirect political exclusion involved persons without connections to people in authority some of whom were excluded from benefits notably in the safetynets. ***Ways of enhancing mechanisms to include persons who have been excluded from services and social protection should be advocated.***

37.   Exclusions are often linked to **household characteristics** and **statuses**. The following eight categories of household that are vulnerable to exclusion deserve particular attention: *1)* ***The destitute and extremely poor, 2) very poor female-headed households,*** *3)* ***elderly households without support, 4) marginalised craftworkers, 5) migrants, 6) Households in early and late stages of the development cycle, 7) households that have fallen off the ideal cycle, 8) households facing shocks notably health and social shocks.***

38.   Exclusions are also related to **individual genderage in relation to wealth and other status characteristics.** The following twelve categories of person may be considered to be particularly at risk: **1) children of very poor households and servants, 2) children not going to school (notably boys in primary and girls in secondary), 3) Adolescent boys and young men from poor, migrant or disadvantaged families, 4)   Adolescent girls and young women from poor and disadvantages categories, 5) Very poor and destitute adults, 6) Adult migrants without access to resources, 7) Adults facing health shocks, including accidents, chronic illness and disabilities , 8) Adult household dependents, servants and labourers, 9) Widows and divorcees (and to a lesser extent widowers and divorced men, 10) The elderly who do not have support and lack resources or face disabilities, 11) Elderly women living on their own, especially from minorities or low status groups, and 12) Persons with illnesses associated with social stigma (HIV/AIDS, leprosy, mental illness).**

The Role of the 'Government Go-betweens' in Changing Rural Ethiopia

Catherine Dom with Rebecca Carter

1.   The paper *'The Role of the Government Go-Betweens in Changing Rural Ethiopia'* is based on research carried out in six communities in four regions of Ethiopia in 2010. It focuses on the role of the 'government go-betweens' (teachers, extension workers in agriculture and health, kebele managers) in the modernisation of rural communities in Ethiopia, and has two main linked purposes.

2.   *First,* it aims to provide an understanding of the profiles and roles of the government go-betweens, including a focus on the not much studied question of how the government go-betweens as 'human resources' are managed. We link our empirical evidence to experiences elsewhere in the country when this is possible, and to broader thinking about policy implementation and how change happens. *Second*, we take a speculative look forward to suggest how the government go-betweens might feature in the 'growth and transformation' of Ethiopia planned to occur over the next four years. We link this to a review of the international literature on the role of community level 'frontline workers' and identify what lessons might be learned from other experiences.

3.   This note presents key highlights from the paper. It focuses on the key findings or 'take away' messages that arose from our analysis. It shows that the donor 'model' for the government go-betweens fails to address the issues that the analysis highlights. Finally it suggests how donors could revisit their inputs in government policy and strategies with a view to better supporting the government go-betweens in a role of 'complex change agent' in rural communities in Ethiopia.

The 'take away' messages for the donors

4.   The **WIDE3 Stage 1 data** suggests that the government go-betweens deployed at the community level are uniquely placed to 'bridge' the cultural 'disconnect' between external and local development models but are presently not empowered to do this. In a number of ways (notably training, system of values, norms and practices in their organisation, and the incentive system in place) they are led to stick to translation of epistemic knowledge and at best, interpretation of the top-down intervention designs and rarely if ever move to negotiation between local/metis knowledge and external/epistemic knowledge.

5.   In areas that are not directly clashing with local knowledge (e.g. kebele administrative services) or where the local model is evolving (e.g. modern education), the government go-betweens can play more of a role of service providers (kebele managers, teachers and school headmasters). This suggests that only if/when the community wants the service can agents become service providers. In areas where the (donor-supported) government efforts to change the rural communities is more starkly at odd with local knowledge, the government go-betweens are confined to a 'change-by-extension' role and prevented from adopting approaches facilitating complex change. They are faced with a two-pronged tension between (i) a role as service provider vs. change agent and (ii) a role as 'extension change agent' vs. 'complex change agent'.

6.   In the WIDE3 Stage 1 communities the 'cadre' of government go-betweens who were generally more satisfied were the teachers and school headmasters, who also (i) enjoyed slightly more inputs in schools than their colleagues in the other sectors; (ii) benefited from a slightly better defined and more humane HRM framework, and; (iii) due to the lesser disconnect between external and local models (which had been negotiated albeit with teachers and school headmasters not playing the lead role in this), could take on more of a service provider than an extension role.

7.   The government change model implicitly recognizes the particular 'location' of the government go-betweens between the higher levels of government and the community. There is not much

recognition of the ensuing tension between upward accountability and local responsiveness. There is even less recognition of the fact that the government go-betweens are 'political actors in their own right' and individuals with the same aspiration to a 'good life' as anyone on both sides, which goes hand-in-hand with a seemingly generalised low level of attention to human resource management issues.

8.   The **international literature** suggests that there is no blueprint for community level health care service provision and behavioural change promotion. In agriculture/the livelihood field, there is a movement towards decentralised management, community/demand-driven and adaptive approaches and greater emphasis on the importance of facilitation skills for extension agents, but there have been few authoritatively positive experiences of agricultural extension. There is an international trend for education systems to increasingly focus on quality and hard-to-reach groups after first successes in raising access, with implications for teachers, and a parallel trend towards greater community involvement in school affairs. We found little about experiences of strengthening community-level administration to compare with the role of the kebele managers. The tensions between extension and change agent and between accountability for policy implementation and local responsiveness are not specific to Ethiopia; also not specific is the comparatively little attention paid to the frontline workers' own position in this.

9.   There are factors that seem to be important for the success of government go-betweens' programmes. Notably, the government go-betweens' role needs to be coherently and sustainably integrated in the wider (national) systems; there may be a case for the central government to take on a role of 'new activism' to support the government go-betweens, in particular with regard to all components of an effective human resources management system; this demands a responsive centre; and there needs to be an appropriate balance between upward accountability and enabling local responsiveness; this has implications for the design of effective and fair performance management systems.

10.   The single but complex 'critical factor' on the 'demand side' is to embed the government go-betweens' role in the local community dynamics. Based on our analysis of the WIDE3 Stage 1 data we suggest that for this to go beyond the 'discourse' level there needs to be recognition of the value of local knowledge by actors on the 'supply side' at all levels, so that the government go-betweens feel that they can legitimately recognise it as well and that they are empowered to negotiate between knowledge worlds.

The government go-betweens in donors' model(s)

11.   *First*, donor discourse gives a lot of space to 'service delivery'. This has become a more frequently used terminology in 'joint government/donor documentation' such as that for the Protecting Basic Services programme and the Wereda City Benchmarking Survey. The joint discourse also focuses on local accountability (implicitly, for service delivery) much more prominently than seven or eight years ago at the outset of the SDPRP.

12.   *Second,* when looking at how donors have been able to think in terms of web of development interventions the picture is uneven. The discourse highlights the importance of joint sector work, synergies between specific sectoral interventions etc. but a quite strong 'silo mentality' prevails in the large multi-donor programmes. More fundamentally there has been very little attention in donor-supported programmes to strengthening the local Councils that are mandated to 'bring all things together' at the community level.

13.   *Third*, apart from regularly raising the issue of the top-down nature of policy implementation in Ethiopia, donors appear not to have given much thought about the two-pronged tension that we identified (service provider vs. extension change agent vs. complex change agent). This tension as well

as questions about 'what change model', the value of local knowledge, the links with and implications for the relative power of the different policy actors and the ways in which performance is managed have not been discussed by the donors with the government.

14.   *Fourth,* donors have regularly raised human resource management (HRM) issues but these efforts are scattered and not well evidence-grounded as little is known about actual HRM practices, especially at the government go-between level. Apart from some focus on pay reform there is a lot less discussion about HRM than there is about service delivery, local accountability for service delivery, and public finance management.

15.   *Fifth,* there has been increasing recognition of some of the factors hampering effective service provision (in particular, lack of inputs) and donors do support interventions that start responding to this in some sectors (e.g. GEQIP in education). But this has not looked beyond and there has not been much thinking about other possible 'proactive roles' (as found in experiences outside of Ethiopia).

16.   This suggests that to date there has been only marginally more attention to and knowledge/ understanding of the role of the government go-betweens and of the conditions in which they are expected to play this role on the donor side, than there is on the government's side. And the donor discussions with the government have been confined at a relatively superficial level.

Donor inputs in policy and strategies for the government go-betweens

17.   We suggest that this should change and that there is **potential for donors to support the government go-betweens in a 'complex change agent' role**. Their strategies to do this must account for the fact that donor influence is relatively limited in Ethiopia. Thus, we suggest that: (i) it is important that donors continuously build better grounded understanding; (ii) donors could also help in comprehensively documenting lessons learned from elsewhere; (iii) there is value in acting collaboratively to address a number of 'basics' that are well recognised by the government as an entry point for discussions on potentially more sensitive matters; (iv) institutionalising successful approaches and consulting the government go-betweens themselves should be cross-cutting strategies.

Strategy 1: Building better understanding

18.   Much more grounded evidence on and understanding of the government go-betweens' role, effectiveness and life and work conditions is needed. Practical ways of building this include: (i) Complementing existing programme monitoring tools and approaches; (ii) Assisting the government to develop and equip Regions and weredas with comprehensive human resource information management systems; (iii) Commissioning specific in-depth studies on practices related to important HRM issues as a basis for joint reflection; (iv) Further supporting longitudinal complexity-informed village-level research.

Strategy 2: Learning further lessons from elsewhere

19.   Donors could assist in building a database and management system for a repository of experiences with government go-betweens from other countries. This could continue to build on the literature that we reviewed for this paper. It would need to be regularly updated as a joint resource for the government and the donors. To be useful there would need to be regularly an analysis of the evidence collected in this way.

Strategy 3: Using the evidence collaboratively and gradually more deeply

20.   The suggestions made here move gradually from simpler to more sensitive issues. In any instance attempts to address these issues should draw fully on the empirically-grounded

understanding and internationally-informed knowledge obtained through the first and second strategies.

21.   Building on government recognition of the need to provide all FTCs, health posts and schools with the required basic inputs (as outlined in the GTP), donors could jointly with the government re-design the PBS, WASH, GEQIP, the HABP and PSNP, the AGP and other programmes, to contribute to this.

22.   Building on government recognition of the special difficulties in remote areas, donors could prioritise interventions so that they focus more or first on those, through: (i) developing and financing appropriate (financial and non-financial) incentives for staff posted there; (ii) giving priority to remoter areas in input distribution (as there are fewer alternatives if inputs are not provided as planned) and; (iii) paying greater attention to the implications of all interventions for the government go-betweens posted in these areas.

23.   As part of this, paying greater attention to the government go-betweens' family situation, taking measures to avoid family separation as well as paying greater attention to the specific vulnerabilities of female professionals (e.g. making kebele officials accountable for this), should be prioritised.

24.   As part of these measures donors could prioritise financing to complement the government universal rural electrification programme so as to ensure access to water and electricity in all schools, health posts and FTCs where the kebele has been connected. Helping the government to rollout a programme of universal kebele-level access to internet-based resources might also be an incentive for the government go-betweens, especially the DAs, HEWs and kebele managers, often young and 'IT-literate'.

25.   Donors could more actively help the government to develop the 'modern HRD systems' which the government has recognised as an important priority. This would start by developing and rolling out comprehensive HR information management systems as outlined above; and move further to systematically address the critical dimensions of recruitment, remuneration, career prospects, training, and supervision and support systems, processes and procedures.

26.   Alongside this, donors could promote and use accountability systems that recognise the complexity of change in rural communities and which empower the government go-betweens as 'complex change agents' and promote the learning/reflexive and team-based approaches that this demands. This would include developing measures aimed to promote a sense of pride for team achievements whilst also encouraging the emergence of a 'corporate' sense of value of the go-betweens' professions (redesigning existing practices of rewarding 'best performance'). Donors could also assist in developing and rolling out peer-to-peer exchange means (e.g. HEWs' newsletters, web-based wereda or even kebele resource centres etc.).

27.   The above requires that donors also become better at strengthening bottom-up mechanisms, among others through helping with the development of more systematic processes for community assessment of the government go-betweens' performance and ensuring that these assessments do matter. There ought to be equal attention to the development or strengthening of appeal and grievance systems for the government go-betweens, that are independent from wereda and community unjustified pressures.

28.   More fundamentally these suggestions would require that donors engage in a discussion with the government about complex change and experiences with complex change facilitation approaches and about the consideration to be given to reorienting the government go-betweens' role away from the current extension approach to a negotiation approach. This in turn has implications for the type

of skills that the government go-betweens should acquire from pre-service training and for performance appraisal systems.

29.   Building on experiences in the WIDE3 Stage 1 villages, donors could help the government go-betweens to develop targeted ways of communicating with the younger generations with a view to drawing on the generational change effect that was clear in a number of cases. Donors could also encourage the government to legitimise 'coalition of change' approaches in which the government go-betweens try to work with non-conventional partners and strike new partnerships.

Cross-cutting strategy

30.   Donors should use and encourage the use of trial and error pilots to find things which seem to work and to find the best ways to spread things which work through different contexts; and monitor how the multiplying things are changing the larger system and to see what macro level interventions would accelerate change.

31.   They should also always explore the perspectives of the government go-betweens and listen to their voices directly, as a privileged way of better understanding their reality, and a way of beginning to build their self-confidence and sense of power (with).